Jos. Story

CHRISTIAN REGISTER.

AND WHY EVEN OF YOURSELVES JUDGE YE NOT WHAT IS RIGHT?—LUKE XII. 57.

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TO THE PUBLIC.

THE present period is distinguished above any other since the first settlement of our country, for the general prevalence of a spirit of free religious inquiry. Amongst all classes of the community, there has been discovered of late, an increasing desire to understand better, and to bring into practical exercise, the genuine principles and spirit of Christianity. And it is with much satisfaction, that the friends of enlightened piety have perceived, that whilst this spirit of inquiry has been exercised with a considerable degree of freedom and boldness, it has, at the same time, been so effectually guarded by good sense, and chastened by piety, that the cause of truth, instead of suffering detriment, has been greatly promoted, by the light that has been thrown upon the true doctrines and principles of our religion.

It will, however, no doubt, be generally admitted, that something remains still to be done, to increase the purity of our Christian faith, and to promote its genuine practical influence upon the heart and life. It seems important, not only that the spirit of inquiry that is abroad, should be kept alive, but that exertions be made, to assist and guide the inquiries of those who are honestly seeking the truth. This important purpose, has been indeed, already essentially promoted, by that valuable periodical work, the *Christian Disciple*. But, considering the high literary character of this work, and that it is issued only once in two months, it has been thought expedient that the public be furnished with a *weekly religious newspaper*.

The subscriber proposes, therefore, to publish weekly in Boston, the CHRISTIAN REGISTER, a work, which, in its doctrines and temper, shall harmonize with the Christian Disciple, but which shall be more *elementary*, and better adapted to the taste and wants of those whose advantages of reading and inquiry have been less extensive. The great object of the Christian Register will be to inculcate the principles of a rational faith, and to promote the practice of genuine piety. To accomplish this purpose, it will aim to excite a spirit of free and independent religious inquiry, and to assist in ascertaining and bringing into use, the true principles of interpreting the scriptures. It will urge the importance and duty of subjecting our faith to the test of scripture and enlightened reason, and of rejecting from our creed, not only what is *contrary* to the general language of the scriptures, but every thing that is not plainly and explicitly taught there. It will also enforce the duty, of a serious and practical regard, to the moral precepts of Christianity, by shewing that the final favour of God toward us, is to depend not so much upon what has been done *to* us or *for* us by another, as upon the temper of mind we have ourselves cherished, and the course of moral conduct we have pursued. And it will earnestly recommend to all, the cultivation of the mild and amiable spirit of the gospel toward those who differ from them, from the belief that genuine piety is not confined to any sect, but exists in a greater or less degree amongst all, and that he is the *best* Christian, not whose speculations are in nearest accordance with the faith of the majority, but whose life and temper are most perfectly and habitually under the influence of the precepts and spirit of the gospel.

It is believed that a work of this kind, if conducted with ability and candor, might render an important service to the cause of *truth, piety and Christian love*, by diffusing religious knowledge, by giving largement and catholicism to the views and feelings of men, and by inculcating those true and rational principles of religion, which are so important to our virtue and happiness.

In conducting this work, in a manner that shall render it an instructive, entertaining and useful publication, the subscriber would inform the public, that he does not rely wholly upon his own strength and resources. He has the promise of the patronage, counsel, and occasional assistance, of a number of gentlemen in this town and vicinity, who stand high in the estimation of the public, for their scientific and theological acquirements, as well as for the soundness of their religious principles. To render the work, as far as possible, satisfactory to subscribers, each number shall contain a summary of the important foreign and domestic news, both political and miscellaneous.—Political discussions, however, shall never be admitted.

The *Theological* department shall contain articles original and extracted, on various subjects, doctrinal, critical and practical, with occasional biography and poetry, and sketches of ecclesiastical history. It shall also contain such well authenticated intelligence as may be obtained, respecting the moral and religious state of different parts of the world, with accounts of the character, operations and success, of the various societies and institutions, in this and other countries, for moral and benevolent purposes.

It is hoped, that the subscribers for this work, will find sufficiently valuable, to induce them to preserve a regular series of the different numbers. At the close of each year a copious index will be furnished of the subjects treated during the preceding year. This will enable those who reserve a series of the numbers, to turn with ease to any subject that may have been treated, and thus to revive the recollection of whatever is interesting or important in the communications of the year.

DAVID REED.

CONDITIONS.

I. The Christian Register shall be printed upon good paper of the same size as this number.

II. The annual price to subscribers will be *two dollars and fifty cents*, to be paid in advance, or *three dollars*, payable in six months.

III. Agents shall be furnished with every eleventh copy gratis.

☞ *The holders of subscription papers are requested to return them, as soon as the last Wednesday in May, to the Bookstore of* Messrs. Cummings & Hilliard, *No.* 1, *Cornhill, where subscriptions are received.*

To the editor of the Christian Register.

SIR,

By a communication in the Repertory of last week, I perceive that you are about commencing the publication of a religious newspaper. I approve the plan of your intended work; and the strong interest I feel in its success, has induced me to make some suggestions relative to the *spirit* in which I hope it will be conducted. I am persuaded you will pardon the liberty I take, and receive my suggestions in a spirit of candour, knowing as you do, that they come from one who is truly your friend. And even should I venture to speak with the freedom of a father, I trust that the experience, which I may be expected to have gained, from a long acquaintance and connexion with the affairs of the christian world, will be a sufficient apology. But in whatever spirit this communication may be received, be assured it comes from one, who has the cause you have espoused much at heart, and who is solicitous to do what he is able, in the little time that God may yet spare him, to extend the knowledge and influence of a pure, rational and charitable religion; and to break down that unholy wall of separation, which too many are endeavouring to raise higher, between the different denominations or classes of the professed followers of Jesus.

It cannot be doubted, that a work, like the one you have undertaken, may do much, in giving currency and influence, to just and amiable views of God and religion. It may and probably will do something also, either in allaying, or exciting still more, that spirit of religious animosity and uncharitableness, which has long been the reproach of the christian name amongst us.

Among the many considerations which will claim your attention in conducting this work, there are two which I think should be kept constantly in view. The first relates to the manner in which you may speak of those who differ from you in opinion, and especially to the temper of mind with which you may repel the assaults of any, who, with whatever weapons, may array themselves against the system of faith you defend. You will undoubtedly witness many occurrences, and hear much, adapted to provoke severe animadversion. You will probably sometimes see, as we have of late seen, our best men and most exemplary teachers of piety, shut out from the christian sympathies and fellowship of their brethren, and denied a share, even in the most conciliatory and affecting services of our religion; and you will probably sometimes hear them called by odious and reproachful names. Although it may require the full exercise of all our best principles, to enable us to bear with becoming meekness, such unworthy treatment, and false accusations, yet I trust that the pure and simple faith of the gospel which *we* have embraced, is of that practical operative kind, and has exerted that sanctifying influence upon the heart and affections, which will prevent us from returning "railing for railing;" or from giving place to any unchristianlike wishes or feelings. A resort to such means, to advance our faith, is not only beneath the dignity of the christian character, but is expressly forbidden by our christian principles. We have much cause to rejoice, that the system of religion we have embraced, rests on a foundation too secure, to need any such instruments for its support or defence.

The man who is afflicted with such narrowness of views, and who has given such reins to his illnatured feelings, as to defame and persecute his christian brother, merely because in the exercise of his protestant privilege of freedom of inquiry and belief, he has come to different conclusions from himself, such a man, is certainly, much worthier our *pity* than our *hate*; and instead of indulging in asperity and recrimination, it becomes us at such times, to remember and observe the injunction of our blessed Master,—"Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." It is our duty indeed, to ourselves and to truth, when attacked, to defend ourselves earnestly and manfully, to have no hesitation in exposing, in its true features of odiousness, whatever is false and slanderous. But this important purpose, is never so effectually promoted, by personal recriminations, or by harshness and bitterness of reproof, as it is by a plain and unvarnished statement of facts, accompanied by affectionate expostulation, and solemn appeals to the consciences of those, who have dared to trifle with our reputation and happiness.

The other consideration, to which I alluded, as deserving constant attention, is, the *earnestness* with which it is important that the views we entertain of God and religion should be inculcated and defended.

It has been complained that the friends of liberal christianity, were indifferent, about the success of what they deem correct principles of religion. With whatever justness this may have been urged in *individual* cases, it has not been true when applied *generally*; and it is a gratifying circumstance to perceive, that many around us, are giving practical evidence, that although some, amongst *us*, as well as amongst *other* classes of christians, have been cold and indifferent, it has not been because our principles are not in themselves important, nor because they are not in their nature adapted to excite men to benevolent action. It is however probably true, that there are still some, who do not yet properly estimate the importance and duty of activity and zeal. This coldness undoubtedly proceeds in some instances, from a disgust that has been taken, at all engagedness and zeal in the support of particular principles, from always having seen such zeal accompanied by an exclusive, denouncing and censorious spirit. But I think it an entirely false conclusion, that, because we declare certain principles to be true and important, we must therefore deliver over to perdition all who deny and oppose them.

It is true indeed, that by opposing any particular principles, we do virtually declare, that those who support them, are so far wrong and blameworthy. But this is by no means saying that they have no commendable traits of character; or that they are not, on the whole, deserving our respect and fellowship. There certainly is such a thing, as temperate and reasonable zeal. We *may*, if we *will*, contend earnestly for the faith, without becoming bigots or persecutors.

But there are no doubt those, who have become in some degree indifferent about the success of what they acknowledge to be correct principles of religion, from having imbibed the injurious maxim, that error is innocent and will be pardoned, in those whose belief and defence of it is sincere. No man however, can have arrived at such a conclusion, but by a very careless course of reasoning. Opinions have practical consequences. They are the springs of action, and the moral features of our conduct will necessarily, in a great degree, resemble those of our principles. It can therefore never be a subject of indifference whether we embrace truth or error. It is, and ever must be, deeply important, both to our present and future happiness, that we embrace the *truth*.

There is no doubt indeed, that God will look with an eye of compassion, upon the errors of those who have had but small advantages for knowing the truth. But whatever may be the palliatives of our guilt, in falling into error, these will not remedy the evils, which have resulted from this error. Paul persecuted and made havoc of the church of Christ; and because he verily thought that he was doing God service, he obtained mercy. But this did not restore the dead to life, or the wounded to soundness, who had suffered from his hand; nor did it relieve the mind of the apostle, through his long life, from the oppressive consciousness of his guilt, in having preferred the decisions of a darkened conscience to the plain teachings of reason. In like manner *our* errors, however innocent in their origin, may have led us into follies and crimes, whose effects upon ourselves and others it is too late to remedy. Error therefore cannot be innocent. Nor can he be innocent before God, who can look with indifference upon its baleful influence on the moral advancement and comfort of his fellow beings. He into whose mind God has poured a light, which guides and cheers him on through all the dark paths of life, is criminally neglectful of his talents, if he does not earnestly exert himself, to diffuse this light, for the guidance and consolation of the spiritually darkened and oppressed minds around him; if he does not unweariedly endeavour, by the life giving energy of truth, to lift from them that weight of anxiety, dread and despair, under which they are bowed down by false views of God and the way of life.

In taking this liberty to address you, and to suggest these thoughts, be assured Sir, I have not done it from any apprehension, that you would not preserve a becoming tenderness of manner, toward those who differ from you, or that you did not properly estimate the importance of the principles you have embraced, and the necessity of contending for them earnestly. I have done it chiefly to encourage you in your good undertaking, and to quicken and strengthen within you, whatever good purposes you may have formed respecting the general temper and character of your work. I doubt not you feel, and will manifest in this cause, an engagedness and zeal, in a good degree worthy its importance. If any thing I have suggested shall prove at all instrumental in enlivening this zeal, I shall think it a cause of self congratulation. Certainly, if any views of God and religion can deserve our affectionate attachment and warm support, it is those which we have embraced; those which reduce the teachings of reason and revelation into one grand and harmonious system of faith and duty; and which direct us to look up to God, not as the frowning Sovereign, but as the merciful Father of his creatures.

Very respectfully, yours,

Miscellaneous Extracts.

ON REVERENCE FOR THE WORD OF GOD.

From Rev. Dr. Ware's Letters to Trinitarians and Calvinists.

Who, let me ask, is the man that manifests the truest reverence for the word of God? Is it he who indolently and carelessly takes the meaning that first presents itself, however absurd or contradictory, or even impossible that may be; or he, who, when the meaning that first presents itself is attended with difficulty or doubt, sets himself with patient and laborious study to ascertain whether it be the meaning intended by the writer; a meaning, which, if it be the word of God, will certainly contain neither an impossibility, a contradiction, nor an absurdity? Is it he, who, without suffering his reason to judge in the case, accepts the meaning which has been assigned to it in an age of ignorance and superstition, and which ecclesiastical authority has sanctioned, enforced, and perpetuated; or he, who, using his own reason, instead of trusting that of another, applies all the helps that time, and industry, and learning have furnished, to the discovery of its true meaning?

We not only avow the principle that reason is to be our guide in the interpretation of Scripture, but we declare that we know not a higher act of disrespect and irreverence to the word of God, than he is guilty of, who, rejecting the free use of reason in its interpretation, exposes it to contempt by attributing to it communications, which could not have been made by the same God, who is the author of our reason. We profess none of that loyalty of faith which consists in implicit subjection to the creed of a master; which is expressed by degrading and undervaluing our reason or refusing its use, and thus becoming prepared to receive absurdities, contradictions, and impossibilities for divine instructions. We think it to be doing no honour to our sacred books to be ready to believe both sides of a direct contradiction, because we think that we find them there. We are satisfied, from the very circumstance that it is a contradiction, or an absurdity, that we must have misunderstood what we there read. We suspend our faith, and apply ourselves with all the aids that reason, learning and industry supply to ascertain the source of our error, and to discover the truth. We believe that Unitarians, by doing this, have done much towards relieving our religion from articles of faith, and the scriptures from opinions attributed to them, which they never taught, which have been a reproach to our religion, and the occasion of its being rejected by many, who would gladly have received all that it has taught, had it been presented to them unmixed with the absurdities and impossibilities, with which they have seen it associated in popular creeds.

CHRIST AND THE FATHER ONE.

One of the most common texts quoted to prove that the Son and the Father are the same being, is that in which Christ says, "I and my Father are one." John x. 30. If we look a little into the context we shall perceive, that in whatever sense these words ought to be taken, they cannot possibly mean, that Christ was the same being as the Father. He had been speaking to the Jews the parable of the good shepherd, and, in alluding to his own death, he said he had authority to lay down his life, and to receive it again. But he immediately after adds, that he had *received* this commandment from the Father; that is, it was by the will and power of the Father, and not of himself, that he was able to lay down his life, and receive it again. He also speaks of doing his works in his Father's name. He says his sheep were given him by his Father, represents himself as one "whom the Father *hath sanctified*, and *sent* into the world." Now let it be asked, whether it were possible for him to use such language, if he were actually speaking of himself, when he refers to the Father? No one can believe this, who would draw any consistent meaning from his discourse. It is obvious from these passages, that when he spoke of himself and the Father being one, he could not mean they were the same being, or person, but that they were united in accomplishing the same object. He acted by the command of God, and by the power, which was given him, and did nothing except in accordance with the divine will.

Such is the conclusion, which a rational interpretation would bring out of the passage it-

self. And this is confirmed by comparing scripture with scripture, which, after all, is the best rule that can be followed. In the seventeenth chapter of John, our Saviour has explicitly told us what we are to understand by his being one with the Father. He prays thus; "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those, whom thou hast given me, *that they may be one, as we are.*" Again, "The glory, which thou gavest me, I have given them, *that they may be one, even as we are one;* I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect *in one;* and that the world may know, that thou *hast sent* me, and hast loved them, *as* thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 11. 21. 22.) Here our Saviour prays, not only, that he and his disciples may be one, but that they also may be one, in the *same sense*, as he and his Father are one. From what has been said, it is plain, that it might just as well be inferred that Christ and his disciples, were one and the same being, as that he and the Father were one and the same. His language is precisely the same in one case, as it is in the other. The disciples of Christ were one with him in acting according to his counsels, purposes, and directions; and in this sense was Christ one with the Father.

Moreover, if this be not the true meaning of the text first mentioned, it will be impossible to reconcile it with others. Christ says, "the Father is greater than I," and declares that he does all his works by the power and aid of the Father. But this would be impossible, if they were one being. How can a being be greater, than himself? If it be allowed, that Christ was one with the Father in promoting his designs, and conforming to his will, there will be harmony and consistency in all the texts, which allude to the character of Christ, but any other explanation, will involve contradictions, which cannot be reconciled.

Unitarian Miscellany.

CHILLINGWORTH'S PLAN FOR UNITING CHRISTIANS.

"Let all men believe the scriptures, and them only, and endeavour to believe them in the true sense, and require no more of *others*, and they shall find this not only a better, but the only means to restore unity. And if no more than this were required of any man to make him capable of *church communion*, then all men, so qualified, though they were different in opinion, yet, notwithstanding any such difference, must be, of necessity, one in communion.

"The presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the *general* words of God, and laying them upon men's conscience together; this vain conceit, that we can speak of the things of God, better than in the words of God; this deifying our *own* interpretations and enforcing them upon *others*; this *restraining* the word of God from that *latitude* and *generality*, and the understandings of men from that *liberty* wherein Christ and his apostles left them, is, and hath been the *only* fountain of all the *schisms* of the church, and that which makes them immortal. Take away these walls of separation, and all will quickly be *one*.—Require of Christians only to believe in Christ, and to call no man master but him only; let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it; and let them that in their *words* disclaim it, as protestants do, disclaim it likewise in their *actions*. In a word, restore Christians to their just and full liberty of captivating their understanding to scripture only; and then as rivers, when they have a free passage, run all to the ocean—so it may well be hoped by God's blessing, that universal liberty, thus *moderated*, may quickly reduce Christendom to TRUTH and UNITY."—*Life, and the religion of Protestants.*

VILLIERS, DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM.

From Murray's "Power of Religion."

GEORGE VILLIERS, duke of Buckingham, and a very distinguished person in the reign of Charles the second, was born at Wallingford-house, in the year 1627. He possessed great abilities, which were much improved by education: but they were shamefully misapplied. "He was," says the earl of Clarendon, "a man of noble presence; he had great liveliness of wit, and a peculiar faculty of turning serious things into ridicule. He had no principles of religion, virtue, or friendship. Pleasure, frolic, or extravagant diversion were all that he regarded. He had no steadiness nor conduct; and could never fix his thoughts, nor govern his estate; though it was, at one time, the greatest in England. He was bred about the king; and, for many years, had a great ascendant over him: but, at length, he drew a lasting disgrace upon himself; and ruined both body and mind, fortune and reputation. The madness of vice, appeared in him, in very eminent instances; and, at last, he became contemptible and poor, sickly and sunk in all respects; so that his conversation was as much avoided, as ever it had been courted."

It appears to have been in this deserted and degraded state, mournfully looking over a life spent in vice and folly, that he wrote the following letter to a particular friend, Dr. W—, a short time before his decease.

"*Dear Doctor!*"

"I always looked upon you to be a person of true virtue, and know you to have a sound understanding; for however I may have acted in opposition to the principles of religion, or the dictates of reason, I can honestly assure you, I have always had the highest veneration for both. The world and I shake hands; for I dare affirm we are heartily weary of each other. O, what a prodigal have I been of that most valuable of all possessions, time! I have squandered it away with a profusion unparalleled; and now, when the enjoyment of a few days would be worth the world, I cannot flatter myself with the prospect of half a dozen hours. How despicable, my dear friend, is that man who never prays to his God, but in the time of distress! In what manner can he supplicate that Omnipotent Being in his afflictions, whom, in the time of his prosperity, he never remembered with reverence? Do not brand me with infidelity, when I tell you that I am almost ashamed to offer up my petitions at the throne of grace, or to implore that divine mercy in the next world, which I have scandalously abused in this. Shall ingratitude to man be looked upon as the blackest of crimes, and not ingratitude to God? Shall an insult offered to the king be looked upon in the most offensive light, and yet no notice taken when the King of kings is treated with indignity and disrespect?

"The companions of my former libertinism would scarcely believe their eyes, were you to show them this epistle. They would laugh at me as a dreaming enthusiast, or pity me as a timorous wretch, who was shocked at the appearance of futurity: but whoever laughs at me for being right, or pities me for being sensible of my errors, is more entitled to my compassion than resentment A future state may well enough strike terror into any man, who has not acted well in this life; and he must have an uncommon share of courage indeed, who does not shrink at the presence of God. The apprehensions of death will soon bring the most profligate to a proper use of his understanding. To what a situation am I now reduced! Is this odious little hut a suitable lodging for a prince? Is this anxiety of mind becoming the character of a Christian? From my rank, I might have expected affluence to wait upon my life; from religion and understanding, peace to smile upon my end; instead of which I am afflicted with poverty, and haunted with remorse; despised by my country, and I fear, forsaken by my God!"

"There is nothing so dangerous as extraordinary abilities, I cannot be accused of vanity now, by being sensible that I was once possessed of uncommon qualifications, especially as I sincerely regret that I ever had them. My rank in life made these accomplishments still more conspicuous; and fascinated by the general applause which they procured, I never considered the proper means by which they should be displayed Hence, to procure a smile from a blockhead whom I despised, I have frequently treated the virtuous with disrespect; and sported with the holy name of Heaven, to obtain a laugh from a parcel of fools, who were entitled to nothing but contempt. Your men of wit generally look upon themselves as discharged from the duties of religion, and confine the doctrines of the gospel to people of meaner understandings. It is a sort of derogation, in their opinion, to comply with the rules of Christianity; and they reckon that man possessed of a narrow genius, who studies to be good. What a pity that the holy writings are not made the criterion of true judgment, or that any person should pass for a gentlemen in this world, but he that appears solicitous about his happiness in the next!"

"I am forsaken by all my acquaintance; utterly neglected by the friends of my bosom, and the dependents on my bounty: but no matter! I am not fit to converse with the former, and have no ability to serve the latter. Let me not however, be wholly cast off by the good. Favour me with a visit as soon as possible. Writing to you gives me some ease, especially on a subject I could talk of forever. I am of opinion this is the last visit I shall ever solicit from you: my distemper is powerful: come and pray for the departing spirit of the poor unhappy BUCKINGHAM!"

DR. DODDRIDGE'S CATHOLICISM.

The universal respect that is felt, for the name and character of Doddridge, gives to his example and opinions a weight and influence very important and advantageous to the cause of piety and charity. The following example of his treatment of those who differed from him, even in particulars which many at the present day think essentially important, is worthy to be deeply impressed on the minds of *all*, —and especially of those who are inclined to judge of men's goodness by the particular cast and colouring of their religious creed.

Dr. Kippis, in his life of Dr. Doddridge says, that, "In his sentiments of those who differed from him in religious opinions Dr. Doddridge exercised *great moderation*. He never confined TRUTH or GOODNESS to one particular sect. The same candid and friendly spirit he also endeavoured to promote among his pupils."

"Once, I remember, some narrow minded people of his congregation gave him no small trouble on account of a gentleman, in communion with the church, who was a professed Arian, and who otherwise departed from the common standard of orthodoxy. This gentleman they wished either to be excluded from the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, or to have his attendance upon it, prevented. But the doctor declared, that he would sacrifice his place, and even his life, rather than fix any such mark of discouragement upon one, who, whatever his doctrinal sentiments were, appeared to be a real christian."

THE AMERICAN EAGLE.

"For my own part," said Dr. Franklin, "I wish the bald Eagle had not been chosen as the Representative of our country. He is a bird of bad moral character. He does not get his living honestly. You may have seen him perched on a dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labors of the fishing-hawk; and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest, for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald Eagle pursues him and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is seldom in good case, but, like those among men who live by sharping and robbery, he is generally poor and often lousy."—*Letter to Mrs. Bache.*

THE OPIATE FOR A KING'S CONSCIENCE.

"When Alexander had in his fury inhumanely murdered one of his best friends and bravest captains—on the return of reason he began to conceive a horror suitable to the guilt of such a murder. In this juncture his council came to his assistance. But what did his council? They found him out a philosopher who gave him comfort. And in what manner did this philosopher comfort him for the loss of such a man, and heal his conscience, flagrant with such a crime? You have the matter at full length in Plutarch. He told him, *that, let a sovereign do what he will, all his actions are just, because they are his!*"—Burke's Vindication of Natural Society.

Religious Intelligence.

UNITARIAN CHRISTIANS IN INDIA.

A society of Unitarians has lately been established at Madrass, consisting wholly of natives. It is under the direction of William Roberts, who is also a native of India. Very interesting communications have been received from him by the Unitarian Society in London. The first letter of Roberts gives an account of his conversion to the christian religion and the unitarian faith; the organization of the society at Madrass, and its present condition and prospects. He has made himself acquainted with most of the best English unitarian writers, and seems to have great zeal in the cause in which he is engaged. He complains much of the want of suitable works in his native language, as very few of his countrymen can read the English. To supply this want in some degree, he translates, and writes notes and commentaries, which are transcribed by his brethren, and circulated as far as their means and opportunity will admit.

A writer in the *Christian Reformer* observes —"This worthy man is proceeding in his truly evangelical work with judgment and zeal.—He had prepared books in the Tamul language for the use of his flock, and had applied, but without success, to the proper authorities for leave to print them. He has also drawn up two tracts on the Hindoo mythology, designed to lead the worshippers of Brahma to the knowledge of Unitarian Christianity. And he is at work upon Notes and Discourses on the Gospels, which he reads in the Unitarian Chapel, and which his brethren copy and circulate. These Hindoo Unitarian Christians have already two schools under their direction.' It may be proper to remark, that Roberts mentions the doctrine of the trinity as having been the greatest stumbling-block to him in giving up his native religion for that of Christianity. His doubts were not fully removed, till he was convinced that the trinity made no part of this religion.

A very learned and opulent Bramin in Calcutta, by the name of Ram Mohun Roy, has lately distinguished himself by his writings and instructions on the doctrine of the divine unity. He has endeavoured to prove to his countrymen, from the Vedas, or ancient Hindoo theological books, that there is but one God, and that their mythology and barbarous rites have been inventions of their own, which have no authority either in reason or their sacred writings. His doctrine is said to have made much progress, and is still advancing. "He told a worthy clergyman at Calcutta, that he preferred Christianity to all other religions, and would certainly embrace it, if it were not for the doctrine of the trinity; but this was an insurmountable obstacle." He, and twenty of his brethren, had resolved to study the New Testament with the greatest attention. We have reason to hope, that this inquiry will not be without some good effects, and that Christianity, introduced from so high and learned a source, may gradually find its way among the people. It is worthy of particular observation that, in both the instances above mentioned, the doctrine of the trinity was considered the strongest objection, by these native Hindoos, against the christian religion.—*Unit. Mis.*

THE BIBLE IN ITALY.

From Lyman's Political State of Italy.

About two years ago Mr. Hartford, an Englishman employed by the British bible society, offered to give any number of Italian bibles to the Papal government for distribution, provided he was allowed to print them at Rome. The government refused this offer except on condition that he printed the edition of the bible translated into Italian by Archbishop Martini, and published in 36 volumes 8vo. The edition of Martini, and another by an archbishop of Turin in 23 large volumes, are the only ones tolerated; and even these are instantly prohibited, if printed without a Latin text and ample notes and illustrations. Such are the opportunities that the poor classes, and indeed, one may say, any classes have in Italy, of instructing themselves in the Holy Scriptures. So much is knowledge denied to the Italian people, that all the offices of the Romish church are in Latin, and mass said in the Italian tongue is absolutely illegal.

The bishop of Pistoja under the protection of the Grand Duke, introduced the use of the vulgar tongue in divine service in his diocese in 1786. But this has been since discontinued.

The only books that the poor, and too many of the rich classes read, are short and simple lives of a few saints.

EVANGELICAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

"The spirit of this institution is domestic. Its attention is directed to the destitute parts of our own land. Its object simply is, to assist young settlements, and poor parishes, to maintain the public institutions of the gospel for themselves, and support schools for their children. This society was formed in 1807, and was originally confined to the counties of Worcester and Middlesex. In 1816 it was opened for the admission of all in the Commonwealth who approve its plan, and are disposed to promote its objects. From this time the society increased rapidly, and its operations became highly effective.

"We have a striking evidence of the value of this institution, and of the smiles of divine providence upon it, in the happy effects its operations have had on the religious prosperity of the people of Belfast in Maine.

"They had been for several years destitute of a regular ministry, had become divided in their sentiments and feelings, and in general, indifferent in respect to the means of religious improvement for themselves, and of instruction for their children. As sheep without a shepherd, they were scattered abroad, were exposed to become a prey to impostors and enthusiasts, and had no prospect of a reunion in the participation of religous ordinances.

"Belfast, in 1810 contained nearly 1300 inhabitants, and yet not a sufficient number could be found to unite in defraying the expence of a candidate for a limited time.

"In this state of things, application was made to the Evangelical Missionary Society, and was not disregarded. The Rev. Wm. Frothingham was sent to them as a religious instructor, and the teacher of their children and youth. The result was, an entire unanimity, with only one exception, in a call of the Missionary to be their stated pastor, the erection of a large and handsome meeting-house, and the settlement of Mr. Frothingham with the promise of a liberal support, and the prospect of great and increasing usefulness.

"Thus, the walls of Zion which were broken down, have been rebuilt, and the flock which had been scattered, and had followed the voice of strangers, has been again gathered into the fold, having its own shepherd.

"We shall be happy if the recital of these circumstances, which exhibit in so fair a point of view the judicious and useful exertions of the Evangelical Missionary Society, shall excite a deeper interest in that society; which, notwithstanding its limited means, has already been instrumental of much good, and if aided by the alms and the prayers of Christians, might be productive of far greater and more extended benefits."

MISSIONS.

Within a few years past, there has been a remarkable activity and zeal, in a considerable portion of the religious community in this country, on the subject of freign missions.

There have been frequent and loud appeals to the charitable feelings and sympathies of the public, by affecting accounts of the moral condition and prospects of the heathen;—and large sums of money have been raised for missionary purposes, and intrusted to the care of a body of men called the "Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions." Under the direction of this Board, four foreign missions have been established since the beginning of A. D. 1812;—two in India—one at the Sandwich Islands in the north Pacific Ocean, and one in Palestine.

Whatever may have been the motives in which these missions originated,—or whatever may be the religious tenets and partialities of their most active supporters, they are certainly very noticable and important movements in the religious world.

Bombay.

The first of the four misions alluded to, was established in 1813 at Bombay, (a small island on the western coast of hither India.) The gentlemen who constituted this mission were the Rev. Messrs. Nevell, Nott, Hall, Rice and Judson. Messrs. Rice and Judson soon left the mission, on account of a change of sentiments on the subject of baptism—and in the summer of 1815, Mr. Nott also left the mission, on account of ill health. The places of these three gentlemen have since been supplied, by the Rev. Messrs. Bardwell, Graves and Nichols.

Ceylon.

The second mission projected by the Board, was that at Ceylon (or India.) The first south-east coast of Hindostation were sent out in missionaries on this mission, the Rev. Messrs. Richards, 1816. They were ordained Poor. In 1819, the Rev. Meigs, Warren, Winslow and Woodward Messrs. Spaulding, Winslow and Woodward were sent to this station, accompanied by Dr. Scudder, who has since been licensed to preach. Since the establishment of this mission, Mr. Warren has deceased, and the health of some of the other gentlemen has been very preca-

tions. The amount of money paid from the treasury of the Board, for the support of these two missions has been $100,000. In relation to these missions, the Board of Commissioners have expressed their opinion, that too little time has elapsed since their establishment, to enable us to form a fair estimate of what their success will be.

Sandwich Islands.

In 1819 the following gentlemen with their wives, were sent as missionaries to the Sandwich Islands, viz: Rev. Messrs. Thurston and Bingham, Dr. Holman, and Messrs. Loomis, Ruggles, Whitney and Chamberlain. They were accompanied by George Tamoree, a son of the king of the island Atooi, and three other youths natives of these islands, all of whom had been receiving instruction at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall in Connecticut.

These missionaries arrived at the island Owhyhee on the 30th of March, 1820. Some interesting documents have lately been received from them, which show that their mission has commenced under very auspicious circumstances.

On their arrival the missionaries learnt, that Tamahamaha the aged king of the island was dead, and was succeeded by his son Rehoreho, and that the people had burnt their idols and abolished the priesthood.

The new king on his accession, consulted the high priest on the subject of destroying their idols and places of sacrifice. The priest approved his proposition, publicly renounced idolatry, and with his own hands set fire to the *Moreah*, saying that he knew there was but ONE Akoah (God) who is in heaven, and that their wooden gods could not save them or do them any good.

On the day after their arrival two or three of the party went on shore and were kindly received. On the day following Krimakoo a chief and his wife, and two widows of the former king, with a number of male and female attendants, came on board the brig and dined on board, having previously sent the captain a present of three hogs and a quantity of sweet potatoes. They behaved with great decorum.

At Toeaigh bay, Mr Bingham went on shore where he visited Krimakoo, and with him the most celebrated Moreah of the island, built by Tamahamaha. It consisted then principally of a vast wall 20 feet high forming three sides of a parallelogram 240 feet in length, and 120 in breadth; within the enclosure were ruins of houses which had been burnt, the ashes of wooden gods, the remains of various offerings, and the ashes and burnt bones of human victims sacrificed to demons. Another similar inclosure of somewhat inferior dimensions, had been used for the sacrifice of beasts, fish, fruits, &c. These places which had been once held sacred, were now open to every one.

On the 4th of April, the missionaries waited on the king Rehoreho and stated their intentions and wishes. The king expressed a degree of approbation of their propositions, but did not give a decisive answer. They learnt that the king had four wives, one of whom was his father's widow, and another his father's daughter. On a subsequent day they fell in with Hanahana the late high priest, who received them kindly and expressed much satisfaction in meeting with a brother priest from America. He assured them that he would be their friend.

April 6th, the royal family came on board the brig to dine. The king was dressed in a princely style, and behaved with great civility. The next day several of the missionaries went on shore to dine with the king. They were accommodated with a table and chairs, and were served something in the American fashion. But the king, and his wives and chiefs, sat upon their mats and dined in their usual manner.

Kirooah the royal residence, is a considerable village, containing two or three thousand inhabitants.—It has a battery of 20 or 30 guns, and a garrison of about two hundred soldiers.

The king gave them all permission to land, and assigned a large house for their accommodation, which had been occupied by the former king. It was 90 feet by 30, without floor, partition or windows. He was gratified to find that they understood so many useful arts, and expressed a regret that there was not amongst them a ship carpenter.

Messrs. Whitney and Ruggles accompanied George Tamoree (the native prince who went out with them from America) to his father, king of Atooi an island 250 miles from Owhyhee. The king received his long absent son with the tenderest affection, and made him second in command over his islands. He said that the arrival of Hoomehoome, as his son is called, "made his heart so joyful that he could no talk much that day." "I thought" says he "he was dead. Some captains tell me he lives in America. I say no—he dead—he no more come back. But now he live—he come again—my heart very glad."

At the earnest request of king Tamoree, Messrs. Whitney and Ruggles have settled at Attooi. Some of the other missionaries are at Owhyhee—some at Mowee, an island 30 miles north-west from Owhyhee,—and others at the island Woahoo, 130 miles north-westerly from Owhyhee. Many of the chief people on the different islands are learning the English language. The king of Owhyhee has begun to read in the New Testament.

Palestine.

In 1820 a mission was established at Palestine. It consisted of Rev. Messrs. Levi Parsons, and Pliny Fiske. Their first destination was Smyrna in Asiatic Turkey. At the last dates, they were at the island Scio, acquainting themselves with the language manners and customs of the country around them.*

Cherokee and Choctaw Indians.

In 1817 a mission was established amongst the Cherokee Indians at a place now called Brainerd. This mission was projected and undertaken by Rev. Cyrus Kingsbury, under the patronage of the Board of Commissioners. The leading object of the conductors of this mission, has been to prepare the way for christianity by the introduction of the arts of civilized life. This they have endeavoured to do by instructing and assisting the natives in clearing and cultivating the land, by furnishing them with the implements of husbandry, and by the erection of mills, smith shops and joiners shops, where they might exercise themselves in these arts, and deriving aid and comfort from them, might learn to value and cultivate them. Mr. Kingsbury by his benevolence and kindness soon established himself in the affections of the natives, and in the course of one year had made very encouraging progress towards a permanent establishment of the mission.

In 1818 it was thought expedient to establish a mission among the *Choctaw* Indians; and as other missionaries had arrived to supply his place at Brainerd, Mr. Kingsbury consented to undertake this mission. In May, 1818, he removed to a place now called Elliot, in the state of Missisippi, situated on a branch of the Yazoo, a river which empties into the Missisippi about 150 miles above Natches. Here his first object was, as it had been when amongst the Cherokees, by a course of benevolent attention to their comfort, to do away the prejudices which the natives by their intercourse with the unprincipled, had acquired against white men, and thus bring them to listen to plans for their civilization. The success of the establishment at Elliot, as well as at Brainerd, among the Cherokees, has been very encouraging. The Choctaws, and particularly the chiefs of the nation, have from the first manifested toward the mission the most friendly dispositions. They have become so sensible of the advantages, which they may derive from the education of their children and the introduction of the arts amongst them, that the chiefs have made a formal donation, of the whole annuity due them from the United States, to be appropriated, at the discretion of the "Board of Commissioners" for the benefit of the mission schools among them. This annuity is paid by the United States to the Choctaws for land purchased of them in 1816. The sum is $6000 per year, and it is to be continued to the year 1836. To encourage and aid the civilization of the Indians, the United States government has appropriated $10,000 per year, to be expended in erecting school houses, and smith shops, supporting schools, furnishing implements of husbandry, &c. wherever there is a prospect of their usefulness.

These missions, seem at present to promise more success than any that have ever yet been undertaken amongst the natives of our country.

The principles upon which they are conducted, seem indeed to be the only ones, in relation to this subject, which approve themselves to the understandings of judicious and practical men. If these missions continue to be carried on, with the same consistency with which they have been commenced; in other words, if in endeavouring to lead these heathens to embrace christianity, the missionaries will avoid disputed and speculative subjects, and preach only those pure, simple and practical truths of the gospel in which most denominations of christians agree, we shall have strong hopes that much good may finally result from their labours.

* *A short time before Mr. Fiske left this country for Palestine, a venerable clergyman addressed him on a certain occasion, in an affectionate but earnest manner, in words, as nearly as we can recollect, of the following import. "In preaching the gospel to the Jews and Mahometans amongst whom you will be situated, if you wish success, preach only the plain, practical and acknowledged truths of Christianity. If you preach to them the doctrine of a trinity, of predestination, or of unconditional election and reprobation, be assured they will spurn you away."*

Boston.

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 20, 1821.

FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE.

By a late arrival at New-York London papers to 28th Feb. have been received.

The affairs of Naples, and the movements of the Austrian troops are amongst the most interesting subjects contained in the papers.

The duke de Gallo was sent forward to Naples to inform the parliament of the *ultimatum* of the Allied Sovereigns. The parliament was in session.—Before he could finish reading his instructions, he was interrupted by cries of "War" from every side of the assembly.

On the 11th Feb. two bodies of Neapolitan troops, one 40, and the other 45,000 strong, had advanced to the frontier. It is said that a corps of 20,000 had actually reached within 20 miles of Rome. The Austrians to the amount of 90,000 had passed the Po; and a part were within eight days march of Rome. The Pope has declared that he will maintain a strict neutrality and hopes that neither party will occupy Rome.—*Daily Advertiser.*

At the formation of the Holy Alliance in 1815, the Allied Sovereigns solemnly declared that their alliance had "no other object, than to publish in the face of the whole world, their fixed resolution, both in the administration of their respective states, *and in their political relations with every other government*, to take for their sole guide, the precepts of the holy religion of the Saviour, viz. the precepts of *justice, christian charity and peace.*" How far their late interference in the affairs of Naples, is consistent with this declaration, must be left to the decision of their own consciences, and of an impartial world.

An interesting debate had taken place in the British parliament, on the affairs of Naples. Some very warmly espoused the cause of Naples; but it seems at present to be the policy of ministers, not to intermeddle with continental quarrels.

The proposal to restore the queen's name to the liturgy was rejected by a majority of 120.

The latest accounts from Spain were Feb. 12th. We learn that in Madrid there were some symptoms of discontent. The king had been called upon to dismiss his body guards, and had complied. Private accounts from Madrid intimate that these small concessions of the king, are only the prelude to greater.

In France the Marquis De La Fayette has taken a decided part in favour of Naples. It is thought however, that the French court is inclined to favour the Allied Sovereigns.

Portugal.

By an arrival at Providence, Lisbon papers to the 2d March have been received.

They are principally filled with the proceedings of the Cortes, which are reported as late as Feb 23d, and contain a *project* of a constitution for the Portuguese monarchy, which assumes as leading principles, the integrity of the Portuguese dominions in all parts of the world, the establishment of the Catholic faith, and of the Braganza family on the throne. The proposed constitution is deemed very liberal. The cortes have already abolished all the privileges of the nobles, and decided that the press shall be free in every respect. The debates on the liberty of the press have been very interesting. The final vote was for civil liberty 68 to 8;—for religious liberty 48 to 36. The proceedings of the cortes, are conducted with dignity and unanimity.

DOMESTIC INTELLIGENCE.

Votes for Governor.

Returns have been received from 241 towns. In these the amount of votes is 44,246, of which, there are for the present governor 26,263 and for the Hon. Mr. Eustis 18,013.

Amendments to the Constitution.

The following is the aggregate of votes received from sixty three towns, on the several proposed amendments to the constitution of this state.

Article.	Yeas.	Nays.
1. Provision for public worship,	5277	6514
2. Change of election days,	5279	6569
3. Governor's negative,	7473	3982
4. City corporations,	6028	5354
5. Senators and Representatives,	3435	8472
6. Qualification of voters,	7617	3753
7. Choice of Notaries, &c.	5547	5850
8. Minors to vote in Militia,	8779	2787
9. Removal of Judges,	4946	6347
10. Harvard College,	3649	7772
11. Oath of office,	7457	3599
12. Abolition of religious test,	6476	4643
13. Incompatibility of offices,	7868	3266
14. Future amendments,	6776	4574

PHILADELPHIA, APRIL 13.—*Reward for Bribery.*—Frederick Axe, late commissioner, and Daniel B. Lippard, late treasurer of the county of Philadelphia, were sentenced, on Wednesday, in the supreme court of Pennsylvania, to pay a fine of 400 dollars each, and to be imprisoned for six calendar months, for BRIBERY in the election of County Treasurer some time since.—*Union.*

Gen. D. B. Mitchell agent for Indian affairs in Georgia, has been dismissed from office by the President of the United States, for aiding in the illicit introduction of African negroes into the State, and for affording facilities for their transportation into the Alabama territory.

Native Missionary College at Serampore.

The Rev. William Ward from India, has been preaching of late in various parts of the United States and collecting contributions in aid of the Missionary College at Serampore. Native youths are educated at this college, for the purpose of being sent out as missionaries amongst their countrymen.

The sums collected by Mr. Ward amounted to nearly 10,000 dollars. Of this sum upwards of 5,500 were contributed in the cities of Philadelphia, New York and Boston.

We understand that the Rev. Professor Everett is to deliver the next anniversary sermon, before the Ancient and Honourable Artillery Company.

Christian Disciple.

This work is devoted to the support of what are called *liberal and rational* views of christianity, and to the promotion of the great cause of piety, pure morals and universal charity. It is published once in two months, at the price of *two dollars* a year, and makes annually an octavo volume of 480 pages.

Subscriptions are received by Messrs. Wells and Lilly.

The discourse of the Rev. Dr. Channing lately delivered before the University in Cambridge, on the evidences of revealed religion, has been published by Messrs. Cummings and Hilliard.

To the editor of the Christian Register.

DEAR SIR,

Till within a few years past, I have considered myself as belonging to that class of christians called Trinitarians. It is true indeed, I had never inquired much on the subject of the trinity, but being taught in early life that it was a true doctrine, and knowing many good men who believed it, I had no doubt of its truth, and thought it my duty to defend it.

The first circumstance which led me to inquire with any interest on the subject, was, the opposition that some of my neighbours made, to the circulation of certain books, in which the merits of the doctrine were discussed. It was *my* opinion, that the circulation of these books, would be rather an advantage than otherwise; not that I doubted the doctrine of the trinity, but because I supposed, that the more the doctrine was attended to, the brighter would appear the evidence of its truth. When I found however, that men who are *supposed* to know, and who *ought* to know the merits of the question, were opposed to inquiry on the subject, and endeavouring to suppress the books in which it was discussed, my faith was shocked. The question irresistibly crowded upon my mind, "Do *truth* fear the light?" I was from this time determined to bring my whole faith to the test of the plain word of God; assured that whatever was essential to salvation, would be found plainly and explicitly revealed. I was probably induced to inquire with the more candour, by finding that Unitarians, and the friends of liberal christianity generally, were not only willing but very solicitous that a fair and full examination should be made, what their faith is, and what are the foundations upon which it rests. Upon examining what was my real belief in relation to the trinity, I found it impossible to give any consistent definition of it. The truth was, I had merely assented to a form of words, without having any definite ideas on the subject.—I was earnestly desirous to find the truth; and as I trust, diligently sought after it, by a serious and candid examination of the scriptures. The result of my investigations has been, a complete conviction that the doctrine of the trinity, is wholly a doctrine of human invention. That Jesus Christ is the "Son of God," and an all sufficient Saviour,—but not the supreme God himself.

The effect, which my change of views has had, upon my Christian hopes and feelings, has—if I know myself, been salutary. The amiable and harmonious system of religion, which the Scriptures now present to me, has given a new ardour to my desires for the diffusion of religious knowledge; and has heightened the consolations and hopes, that flow from the contemplation of the mercy of God through a Saviour. But the most important effect, I conceive to be that, which was wrought upon my feelings toward my Christian brethren who differ from me. Uncharitableness was once my besetting sin;—but I have now great satisfaction in the belief, that He, who "seeth not as man seeth," and who knows all the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, will finally accept to his favour multitudes, whom weak mortals have thought themselves justified in excluding from the fellowship of the faithful.

If Sir, this imperfect statement can be of any service to you, it is at your disposal.

Yours, &c

NOTICE.

Subscriptions for the Christian Register are received at the Bookstore of Messrs. Cummings & Hilliard, *No. 1, Cornhill. The public are respectfully informed, that if sufficient patronage is given to the work, it is intended to issue the next number, on the first of June; if not, it will cease with the present number. It is highly desirable, that the holders of subscription papers should return them as soon as the last Wednesday in May, or sooner if practicable.*

MARRIED—In Camden, S. C. Charles A. Bullard, Esq. formerly of Mass. to Miss Margaret Douglas, of Galaway, Scotland.

In Milton, on Monday evening last, Joseph W. Revere, Esq. of this town, to Miss Mary Robbins, daughter of the Hon. Edward H. Robbins.

DIED—In Middleborough, the venerable John Alden in the 103d year of his age. His great grandfather whose name he bore, as did also his grandfather and father, was one of the first settlers of New-England, and is said to have been the man who first stepped upon the Plymouth rock. His grandmother was the daughter of Mr. Peregrine White, who was the first English male child born in New-England. His descendants are 19 children—62 grand children—134 great-grand children, and several of the 5th generation. He was the oldest man in the Old Colony, and probably the oldest in the Commonwealth. He had been a professor of religion and connected with a church upwards of 78 years. We understand that his portrait was taken by a skilful artist a few weeks before his death, to be deposited in the gallery of curiosities belonging to the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth.

In New-York, Jacob Sherred, Esq.—By his will, after private legacies to the amount of about $30,000, 5000 to the Orphan Asylum, and 2500 to the African Episcopal Church, he has bequeathed the residue of his estate to the *Protestant Episcopal Theological School in the State of New-York.* His whole property is estimated at $125,000.

Poetry.

From the Harrisburgh Federalist.

SATURDAY NIGHT.

Sweet to the soul the parting ray,
That ushers placid evening in;
When with the still expiring day,
The sabbath's peaceful hours begin;
How grateful to the anxious breast,
The sacred hours of holy rest.

I love the blush of vernal bloom,
When morning gilds night's sullen tear,
And dear to me the mournful gloom
Of autumn, "Sabbath of the year;"
But purer pleasures, joys sublime,
Await the dawn of HOLY TIME.

Hush'd is the tumult of the day,
And worldly cares and business cease;
While soft the vesper breezes play,
To hymn the glad return of peace;
O season blest, O moments given!
To turn the vagrant thoughts to heaven.

What though involv'd in lurid night,
The loveliest charms of nature fade!
Yet, mid the gloom, can heavenly light,
With joy the contrite soul pervade;
O then, Great Source, of light divine,
With beams etherial, gladden mine.

Oft as these hallowed hours shall come,
O raise my thoughts from earthly things,
And bear me to my heavenly home
On living Faith's immortal wings—
'Till the last gleam of life decay,
In one eternal SABBATH DAY!

"*The following beautiful Sonnet, by the late Dr. Leyden, is the germ of the most poetical part of Graham's Poem, called* "The Sabbath."

SABBATH MORNING.

Hail to the placid, venerable morn,
That slowly wakes, while all the fields are still;
A pensive calm on every breeze is borne,
A graver murmur gurgles from the rill,
And echo answers softer from the hill,
While softer sings the linnet from the thorn,
The sky-lark warbles in a tone less shrill,
Hail! light serene! hail! holy Sabbath morn.

The gales that lately sighed along the grove,
Have hush'd their downy wings in dead repose,
The rooks float silent by in airy droves,
The sun a mild, but solemn lustre throws;
The clouds that hovered slow, forget to move;
Thus smil'd the day, when the first morn arose.

WHY WAS JESUS CHRIST PERSECUTED.

It is an interesting question, Why was Jesus Christ persecuted? By what conduct, and what doctrines, did he awaken that unrelenting malignity which pursued him to the cross, and even exulted in his last pangs? The subject is important, as it throws a lustre on the character of our Lord, and as it may correct some mistakes as to the class of his followers, to whom the honor eminently belongs of walking in his steps.

One principal cause of the persecution of Jesus (a cause to which our remarks will now be confined) is to be found in the *enlarged, generous and liberal sentiments, which he communicated in relation to the character of God, and to the nature of religion.* Jesus was sent to live and to preach in the midst of a bigoted, exclusive and censorious people, who regarded God as a partial being, and expected to monopolize his favour, who regarded all other nations with contempt, and ascribed to the Creator the same unfriendly feelings, who placed religion in forms of worship which were confined to themselves, and, through an excessive and arrogant estimation of their own distinctions and peculiarities, discarded the obligations of general benevolence, and severed as far as possible the bond which united them to the great family of mankind. Such were the Jews, and especially the Pharisees;—and what course did Jesus pursue? His whole ministry was one continued testimony against their narrow and unworthy views of God and of his service; one continued testimony to the unbounded love of our heavenly Father, and to his delight in benevolence and charity, as the most acceptable service which his creatures can render him. Jesus continually taught, that the character of God is *parental*, that his love extends beyond the Jew to the Gentile, and that many shall come from the east and west, the north and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in his kingdom. He taught that God prefers mercy or humanity to sacrifice, that the noblest use of the Sabbath is doing good, and that the compassionate Samaritan, although a worshipper on Mount Gerizim, was more acceptable to God than the Priest and Levite, whose superior light did not guide them to charity. He taught, that the Pharisee, notwithstanding his long prayers and disfigured face, was an abomination in the sight of Heaven, because he despised and condemned others, because he valued himself on his forms, and made a parade of saintship, whilst his heart was a stranger to mercy, justice, and the love of God. He taught that God abhors ostentation, censoriousness and spiritual pride, and that the service, in which he most delights, consists in the exercise of a candid and forgiving temper, and in modest and silent acts of kindness and devotion. In one word, he taught, that God loves not a chosen few, but sent his son to be the Saviour of the world; that Publicans, Sinners, Samaritans and Gentiles are all comprehended in the offers of his mercy; that love of enemies and a love of peace constitute men in the noblest sense, children and followers of their Father in heaven; and that the reign of Messiah consists, not in spreading a religion of forms, or in exalting a particular people, but in diffusing through the whole earth filial piety, humility, and charity.

These generous and enlarged views were a principal cause of the malignity and persecution, which fell on the head of Jesus. The Elders, Rulers, Scribes and Pharisees, hated him because he testified against their narrowness, hypocrisy, pride and bigotry, because he resisted their exclusive feelings and hopes, and in his conduct and teaching, inculcated a liberality of sentiment altogether uncongenial with the spirit of his age. It is true, that they condemned Jesus at last on different grounds. They accused him before Pilate, of making himself a king and the Son of God. But in this they discovered their characteristick hypocrisy. At that very moment, they were looking with restless impatience for a distinguished personage, who would assume these very titles, of Son of God and king of Israel, and under whose sway they hoped to subvert the throne of the Cæsars; and one great objection to Jesus was, that he gave no countenance to these views, but preferred the glory of founding a spiritual empire of love to God and to mankind.

We thus learn one principal cause of that singular hatred with which Jesus was pursued, his actions watched, his words perverted, his character aspersed, and his blood shed on the cross as if he were the vilest of malefactors. To the same cause we must ascribe, in a great degree, the persecution of the apostles. Every where the Jews followed these first preachers of Christianity with clamor and rage, because they taught, that God was the God of the Gentiles as well as the Jews, that the blessings of the Messiah were equally extended to all mankind, that the partition wall of the Mosaick dispensation was broken down, and that love was the fulfilling of the law, and the badge of the subjects of Messiah's kingdom.

These remarks place the character of Jesus in a peculiarly attractive and exalted light. I know not a stronger evidence of his divine mission and sublime virtue, than his superiority to the narrow spirit of his age, and his cheerful and resolute endurance of scorn and outrage, in inculcating the paternal character and unbounded love of God, and the glory and blessedness of charity.—From these remarks we also learn, to what Christians the honour eminently belongs of being conformed in principles, efforts and sufferings, to Jesus and his apostles. They are those Christians, who adhere to enlarged and liberal views of God's character and service amidst opposition and persecution, who, denying themselves and taking the cross, hold forth in a bigoted, exclusive and censorious age, those great principles which exposed their beloved Lord, and their elder brethren, the apostles, to reproach, and violence, and death.

It is a melancholly truth, that these generous views, which were persecuted in the time of Christ, have continued to be opposed to the present day But at this we cannot wonder. The selfishness, pride, and timidity of men all unite in leading them to ascribe to God, partial, narrow, severe, and tyrannical principles of administration, and to disparage, censure, hate, and persecute those, by whom more liberal views are cherished. It is melancholly to look back on the history of the church, and to observe that, notwithstanding the light of the gospel, as gloomy and as dishonourable views of God have been current among Christians, as prevailed among the Jews. The history of the church shews us, that the most difficult triumph of Christianity is over that exclusive spirit, which brought Jesus Christ to the cross. Would to God, that our own age were an exception to this truth. What a thick darkness at this moment hangs over a large part of Christendom. The mild and cheering light of the gospel hardly struggles through the clouds of error. The *theory* which is embraced by many Christians in relation to the character, government and will of God, is truly horrible.—Do not some Christians believe, that God brings men into existence wholly depraved and wholly impotent, that he selects a certain number, as exclusive objects of that grace which is essential to salvation, and plunges the rest into eternal misery, on account of sins to which they were inevitably impelled by the nature which he gave them? Do not some Christians believe, that God consigns to eternal flames children who die in infancy, or if he spares them, that he still regards them as meriting this doom, and spares them that they may be trophies of his pardoning mercy? Do not some Christians believe, that the millions and millions of the heathen world, who are born and live in the thickest darkness, are all lying under sentence of endless wo, and can only be saved by that gospel which has never been preached to them? Do not some Christians believe, that God will consign to eternal torments every individual, however unwearied in the study of the Scriptures, who cannot reconcile the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead, with the fundamental doctrine of the Divine Unity, and who conscientiously believes that the Scriptures every where speak of God as one person, even the Father? To conclude, do not vast numbers of Christians believe, that God confines his favour to those who assent to this or that obscure and inexplicable dogma, about which men of the greatest wisdom and apparent piety have been divided, and prepares intolerable and endless fire and wo for all who dissent from the unintelligible creed?—Is not such the God who is now worshipped by a vast number of Christians? And may we not say, that according to some of these views, he is a God of as dark and vengeful attributes as ever haunted the imagination of a Druid, or was ever adored in the gloomy forests of the North? Such is the God, whom many professed followers of the benign and compassionate Jesus, have placed on the throne of Heaven, a God, under whose dominion the universe would be shrouded with a horrid gloom, and existence become an infinite calamity! Such is the God, whose attributes have struck terrour into multitudes of conscientious believers, and from whose oppressive and degrading service, many have fled for refuge to infidelity, or to absolute thoughtlessness on the subject of religion?

It is a very interesting question, What is the duty of Christians while such darkness prevails? Their duty is to follow their master, in exhibiting in their lives and with their lips, enlarged, generous and liberal views of God and of his service. Let them be patient and persevering witnesses to his paternal character, his unbounded love, his equitable administration, and to the superiority of love or charity to faith, hope, and the most burning zeal. If they are appointed to suffer reproach, calumny, exclusion, excommunication, or the loss of the best earthly blessings in making this good profession, let them look to Jesus, who was persecuted before them in the same cause, and esteem it an honour to be associated with him, by a fellowship of sufferings. As affectionate children of God, let them lift up their voices against those sentiments which cover him with dishonour, and change him from the Father, into the tyrant and scourge of his creation. As brethren of the human family, and members of the body of Christ, let them never cease to oppose those exclusive views of religion, which weaken the obligations of charity, sow dissention, and convert men into persecutors and revilers.

It is not intended by these remarks, to deny the Christian character to those, who hold the dishonourable views of God, which have now been exposed. In general, their hearts disclaim the principles of their creed; and the *precepts* of Christianity, which cannot be mistaken, contribute much to correct the practical influence of their *theory*. Still their theory does great injury. It distresses and degrades those who receive it. It shocks and disgusts many refined and generous minds. It spreads ideas of Christianity, which lead to contempt and rejection of the whole system; and should it be suffered to prevail to the exclusion of more just and honourable conceptions of the Gospel, it would prove as fruitful a parent of infidelity, as the Catholick faith has proved in France. No religion can ever subsist in an improving state of the world, but *that which exhibits God as being worthy to be loved*, and *which breathes a divine charity into the hearts and lives of those by whom it is embraced.*—Chr. Dis. old series, No. 40.

ON BELIEVING PROPOSITIONS WHICH WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND.

The following letter and remarks have been extracted from Dr. Benson's "Dialogue between Theophilus and Pyrrho." In the course of the Dialogue Pyrrho produced and read the letter as one lately received from a friend. The letter was then made the subject of conversation.

"DEAR SIR,

When I have no news to impart, I collect what materials I can of any other kind, to show how desirous I am to keep up a correspondence with you. An ingenious gentleman of my acquaintance, whom I call Novatianus, was in company with the lady Aspasia; who was exclaiming bitterly against a certain preacher, whose historical name shall be Eusebius. For Eusebius had asserted something in one of his sermons, which gave the lady great offence.—Upon which she condemned him with a warm zeal, and great fluency of speech; and declared she would never hear him more as long as she lived. This occasioned the following dialogue between her and my friend.

Novatianus. What was it, Madam, in Eusebius' sermon, which offended you so much?

Aspasia. He asserted that we are to believe nothing but what we can understand.

Novatianus. Was that the thing which gave you so much offence.

Aspasia. Yes, sir, and enough too. I wonder how any body can venture to assert such a thing.

Thus far the dialogue proceeded; and then they conversed for an hour or two, upon other subjects; by which means this affair was quite forgotten. Novatianus then wrote with his pencil upon a small piece of paper the following words in Greek, ὁ Θεος αγαπη εστι, and then very gravely gave them to the lady and desired her to read them. That revived the dialogue which proceeded as follows:—Aspasia, looking first upon the paper, and then looking earnestly, and with surprise and confusion, in Novatianus' face, said, sir, I cannot read them.—What do you mean by this? It is not English, and they are strange letters to me. I cannot imagine what you design by asking me to read what I know nothing about. Novatianus gravely said, do you *believe* them, madam?

"How can I (answered Aspasia, with great quickness) unless I *understand* them! Hold, madam, (replied Novatianus) you may, surely, believe things which you cannot understand.

"*Aspasia.* That is impossible.

"*Novatianus.* Then I find that you are, after all, of Eusebius' opinion, notwithstanding his sermon offended you so much.

This startled the lady and caused her to say, I profess I believe I am wrong. The thing never appeared to me in this light before. I really begin to suspect that I was mistaken, and that Eusebius was in the right. I beg his pardon for condemning him before I had duly considered the reasonableness of what he said. But what is the meaning of these words? For I cannot so much as read them.

Novatianus said, I will assure you, madam, they are the words of holy Scripture; and that according to the original. They contain a plain truth; and a very great and important truth. I would, therefore, have you try once more whether you cannot believe them. Aspasia was now impatient to have them explained; and said to Novatianus, tease me no longer, I freely acknowledge that I was too rash and inconsiderate; and I am now fully convinced that I cannot tell, whether I believe what you propose to me, or no; till I understand what is meant thereby. Pray tell me, therefore, what the words signify, and keep me no longer in suspence. As soon as I *understand* them, I will then tell you fully, whether I *believe* them, or no.

"Well then (said Novatianus) I will gratify you by telling you that you may find the passage 1 John iv. 8. and the English of it is, 'God is love.' That proposition (said Aspasia) I most readily and firmly believe; but I find I could not believe it, till I understood it. I heartily beg Eusebius' pardon, and sincerely condemn mine own folly and imprudence, in censuring what I ought to have applauded. I will promise you, I will go and hear him again; and shall now have a better opinion of him than ever.

"The next time Novatianus visited Aspasia she continued of the same mind; and severely condemned herself; but applauded Eusebius; and thanked Novatianus, for taking so kind and ingenious a method of leading her into right sentiments upon that head. But was ready to wonder, that she had not before seen the matter in the same light;—as it appeared so very obvious, now she had attended to it, and carefully considered it.

"I know, my friend Pyrrho, that you are a speculative man, and will make reflections on such a story, which would not occur to others.—Instead of news, therefore, or business, I thought it might not be amiss to send you this story. If it can afford you any useful hints, it is at your service. If not, accept it as a testimony of my being ready to oblige you.

"I am yours, &c."

"When Pyrrho had read the letter, Theophilus remarked that Novatianus had acted like a man of sense, and that he had clearly shown that *men cannot believe what they do not understand.*

"Pyrrho alleged, that divines had often asserted that we may and ought to believe things above reason, though not contrary to it.

"Theophilus replied, that there were two senses in which this proposition may be interpreted. The one is, that *faith*, or what is revealed as the *object of faith*, contains some things which human reason alone could not have found out; but if known at all, must be discovered by *revelation.* For instance, 'that men are to be raised from the dead; and that Jesus Christ is to judge them.' And in this sense I suppose all who acknowledge divine revelation are agreed, that some of the objects of faith are above reason.

"But there is another sense in which faith has by some been affirmed to be above reason: viz. that men may and ought to believe things which they *cannot understand.*—I look upon this assertion to be groundless and false; and that in this sense faith can no more be *above reason*, than it can be *contrary to it.*

"*Pyrrho.* Will you not allow that there are many things which we believe, though we cannot comprehend how they are effected?—For instance, we believe that God made the world, though we do not know *how* he made it. We believe that the soul and body are united, and mutually influence each other; though we do not know *how* they are united, or how body and spirit can have such a mutual influence.

"*Theophilus.* Unless we understand what is *meant* by these words—*God created the world*—how can we talk or think of such a thing.—Unless we had ideas affixed to the words *body* and *spirit*, we could not talk of their union.—*That God made the world* is a plain proposition, which we all understand and believe.—*How he made it*, is not a proposition, but a question; and hence not a subject either of belief or disbelief. The answer to this question would be a proposition—and if God should be pleased to communicate an answer, (for he alone can do it,) we should, undoubtedly, be able to understand it.

"Whatever God says, I am very ready to assent to it, for that very reason, *God hath said it.*—But I must understand *what he said*, as well as be satisfied that the discovery came from God, before I can believe it is a divine *revelation.*

"The church of Rome says, 'What! are you wiser than all your forefathers?' And they quote great names and many authorities.—But protestants do not much regard such arguments against scripture and common sense."

The treasurer of the American Bible Society has acknowledged the receipt during the month of March, of $2296,74 as donations from societies and individuals. During the same month, the society issued 3076 bibles and 4792 testaments, the whole amounting in value to $2162,96.